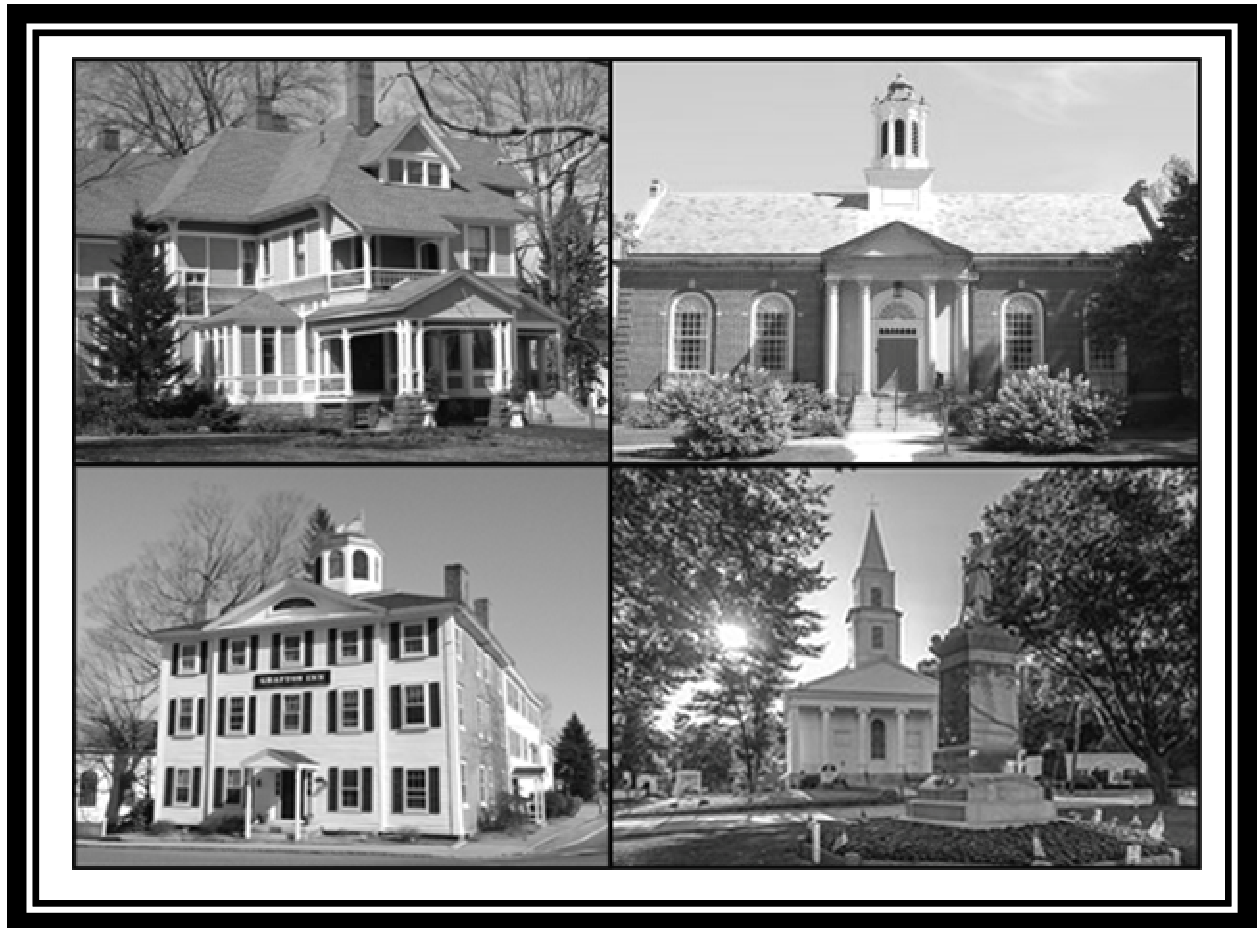




## Grafton Historic District Commission

# Property Owners Informational Handbook And Design Guidelines





Commonwealth of Massachusetts

## Town of Grafton

### Historic District Commission Grafton Municipal Center, Grafton, MA 01519

August 2015

Dear Historic Property Owner or Tenant

The Grafton Historic District Commission appreciates and thanks you for your continued Dedication to preserving the architectural integrity of your property located within the town's historic district. In an effort to help you maintain the unique features of your historic property the commission has assembled the enclosed information about the Grafton Historic District Commission and your requirements as a property owner within the district.

The Grafton Historic District, was established by a Town Meeting vote in 1981, encompassing the Common and the structures immediately surrounding it. The homes, churches and commercial buildings in this area were constructed over a period of more than 250 years and represent a variety of architectural styles. The Common adjacent buildings create an architecturally significant landscape and convey a remarkable sense of connection to Grafton's history.

The Grafton Historic District Commission is a seven-member board appointed by the Selectman that is charged with preserving the architectural and historic integrity of the structures with the districts to that this heritage may be appreciated and enjoyed for generations to come.

As a property owner or tenant, you are reminded that you must first submit an application to the Commission if you plan to make any changes in the exterior of your building. The procedure for obtaining the Commission's approval is straightforward and involves a simple application. Application forms are available from the Town Clerk located in the Municipal Center, 30 Providence Road (508) 839-5335, ext. 195, or by visiting the town website [www.town.grafton.ma.us](http://www.town.grafton.ma.us) and clicking on "Boards and Commissions."

Please note that any exterior work on structures in the Historic District requires certification prior to the work being done. When the work involves no change in material or color, a Certificate of Non-applicability can be issued.

Commissioner John Morgan is authorized to issue such certificates and can meet with the property owner or other appropriate person at the worksite to evaluate the project and certify it, usually within two or three days. He can be contacted at 508-839-1101. If the work involves any change in material or color, then a Certificate of Appropriateness is required. By law, the certification process requires a minimum of 12 days after a Commission meeting when the project would have an "insubstantial" impact on the District, and the process requires a minimum of several weeks if the impact is determined to be "substantial". Thus, those intending to do exterior work in the Historic district should plan ahead to avoid delays.

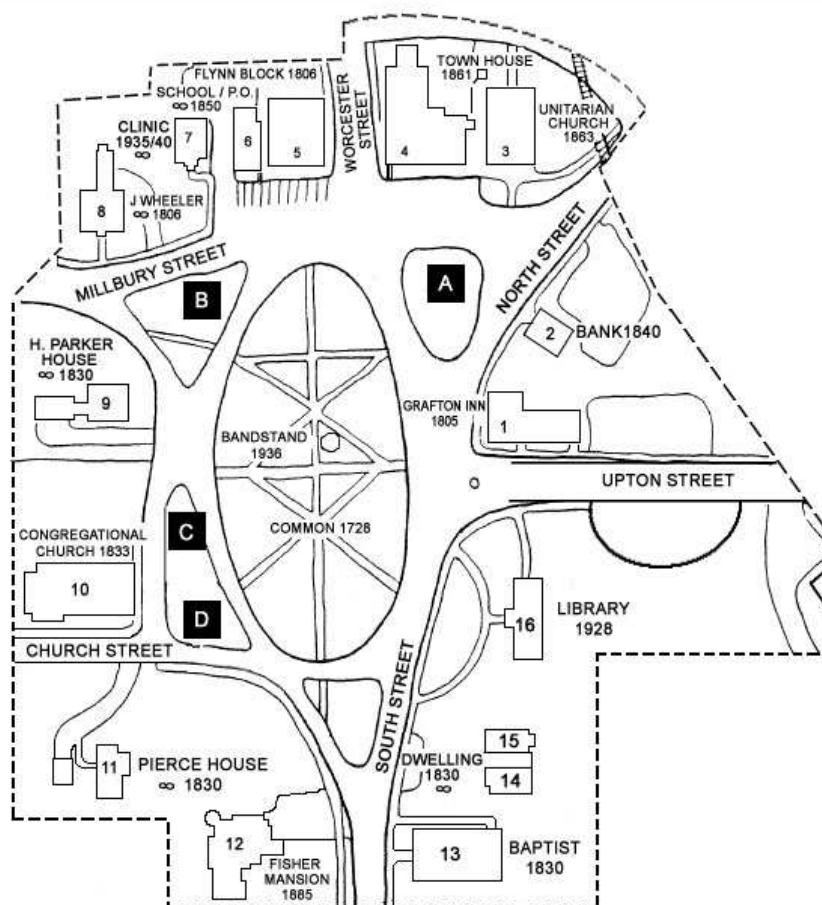
A map of the Grafton Common Historic District and the application for certificate of Appropriateness, Certificate of Non-Appropriateness and Certificate of Hardship are closed for your convenience.

Listed below are the names of the members of the Historic District Commission. Each member serves as a personal liaison between two or three property owners or tenants and the Commission. Please feel free to contact him or her if you have questions regarding the steps you need to follow to alter the exterior of your building. We want to help you preserve your property and the Grafton Historic District.

Sincerely,  
John Morgan, Chairman

<b>Commissioners</b>	<b>Personal Liaison</b>
Mr. John Morgan (508) 839-9461	Flynn Block (Grafton Country Store) School / Post Office (McManus Building)
Mr. Bill Nicholson (508) 839-3963	Grafton Inn, Bank (Magill Associates) Pierce House (Private Residence)
Mr. Robert J. Perla (508) 839-2539	Congregational Church, Fisher Mansion (JCSI) and Grafton & Upton Railroad
Mr. Paul A. Scarlett (774) 437-6346	Grafton Town House, Town of Grafton / Library Unitarian Church, Town of Grafton / Upton Street Properties
Mr. Bradford Schlapak (508) 887-6694	Baptist Church and Two Dwellings (Private Residences)
Mr. John Stephens (508) 839-9408	H. Parker House (Kids on the Common Pediatrics) J. Wheeler House (Private Residence), Clinic (Vista Financial)

# Grafton Common Historic District



There are a total of 16 building as well as 3 parcels without buildings in the Grafton Common Historic District.

Each Commissioner is assigned several buildings and/or properties which they are responsible for representing. Commissioners are responsible for serving as liaisons to the Commission, the property owners and the public for specific properties in the District.

Please feel free to contact individual Commissioners about specific properties. Other inquiries or general questions can be directed to John Morgan, Chairman, Historic District Commission (839-9461, jjemorgan@charter.net). Contact information for all Commissioners can be found at the Town of Grafton Historic District Commission web page.

ID	Name on Map	Circa	Address	Commissioner
1	Grafton Inn	1805	25 Grafton Common	William Nicholson
2	Bank	1840	21 Grafton Common	William Nicholson
3	Unitarian Church	1863	3 Grafton Common	Paul Scarlett
4	Town House	1862	1 Grafton Common	Paul Scarlett
5	Flynn Block	1806	8 Grafton Common	John Morgan
6	School / Post Office	1850	10 Grafton Common	John Morgan
7	Clinic	1935	12 Grafton Common	John Stephens
8	J. Wheeler House	1806	2 Oak Street	John Stephens
9	H. Parker House	1830	9 Grafton Common	John Stephens
10	Congregational Church	1833	30 Grafton Common	Robert Perla
11	Pierce House	1830	1 Church Street	William Nicholson
12	Fisher Mansion	1885	2 South Street	Robert Perla
13	Baptist Church	1830	1 South Street	Brad Schlapak
14	Dwelling	1830	39 Grafton Common	Brad Schlapak
15	Dwelling	1830	37 Grafton Common	Brad Schlapak
16	Library	1928	35 Grafton Common	Paul Scarlett

## Not Shown on Map:

Town of Grafton Properties.....4 & 6 Upton Street ..... Paul Scarlett  
Grafton & Upton Railroad .....8 Upton Street ..... Robert Perla

## War Memorials (maintained by the Trustees of Soldiers and Sailors Memorials)

A.....Civil War    B.....World I    C.....World War II    D..... Korean and Vietnam War

# Grafton Historic District Commission

## Design Guidelines



Town of Grafton, Massachusetts



August 2015



#### Acknowledgements:

The Grafton Historic District Commission gratefully acknowledges the assistance of the Mass Historical Commission, along with many town historic district commissions in the formulation of these guidelines

The Grafton Historic District Commission's Design Guidelines were produced by the members of the Grafton Historic District Commission.

John Morgan, Chair  
William Nicholson, Vice Chair  
Robert J. Perla  
Paul A. Scarlett, Clerk  
Bradford Schlapak  
John Stephens

Author: Grafton Historic District Commission

See <http://www.town.grafton.ma.us> for downloadable version of this document.

Applications for certificates are included in this document for your convenience. They can also be acquired at the Grafton Town Clerk's Office, located at 30 Providence Road, Grafton, Massachusetts.

## Table of Contents

<b>Introduction</b>	8
<b>Using these Guidelines</b>	8
<b>Certificate Process</b>	9
<b>General Design Guidelines</b>	10
<b>Specific Design Guidelines</b>	11
<b>Outbuildings</b>	11
<b>Chimneys and Masonry</b>	11
<b>Demolition</b>	12
<b>Doors</b>	12
<b>Fences</b>	13
<b>Foundations</b>	14
<b>Landscaping</b>	14
<b>Grading and Site Work</b>	14
<b>Gutters, Downspouts, and Drainage</b>	14
<b>Rain Barrels</b>	15
<b>Composting</b>	16
<b>Types of Bins</b>	17
<b>Lighting</b>	15
<b>New Additions or Structures</b>	17
<b>Sheds, Gazebos, Play, Pools, or Other Structures</b>	18
<b>Shed Application Certification Process</b>	18
<b>Paint</b>	20
<b>Porches, Stoops, Balconies, and Porticos</b>	20
<b>Roofs</b>	20
<b>Siding and Trim</b>	21
<b>Signs</b>	21
<b>Guidelines</b>	21
<b>Shutters</b>	24
<b>Stairways, Steps, and Railings</b>	24
<b>Windows</b>	25
<b>Applications</b>	25
<b>Appendix</b>	35

## **INTRODUCTION**

There are over 200 historic districts in the Commonwealth. Since the first historic district was established on Nantucket in 1955, many irreplaceable historic and cultural resources throughout Massachusetts have been protected by concerned property owners working with the volunteer members of the state's historic district commissions. The Historic Districts Act, Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 40C, was created to protect and preserve the historic resources of Massachusetts through a local review system that encourages and ensures compatible and appropriate improvement and development within historic districts.

The Grafton Historic District Commission (GHDC) is a group whose seven members appointed by the Board of Selectmen, meets monthly to help property owners in our historic districts make informed and successful decisions about exterior architectural and site changes to their properties. The GHDC is authorized by the Historic District Act (Chapter 47 of the town charter of the town of Grafton, Massachusetts) to review the appropriateness of all proposed exterior changes to buildings and structures within the historic districts which are visible from any public street, public way, public park or public body of water.

The members of the GHDC have written these guidelines to help you determine what your obligations are to both your property and your neighbors, and to help you understand how to use the members of the GHDC in an advisory role to improve the renovation process you are about to embark upon. As your neighbors and fellow owners of historic properties, we understand the challenges and rewards of owning an historic home or building, and are here to help you with questions and projects small and large.

## **USING THESE GUIDELINES**

If your work affects the exterior of your property, whether or not you need a building permit, you will need to review the work you are contemplating with the GHDC before beginning your project. The GHDC encourages historic district residents to contact the GHDC Chairman and arrange for an informal project review. An informal design review by the GHDC early on in the design process will ensure that your project will be a successful addition to the Historic District.

We invite you to use this document as a set of principles that can guide your work, and to see the members of the GHDC as professionals eager to collaborate with you in your efforts to preserve and enhance the valuable collective resource we all share in our historic district. Our goal is to be ready with helpful advice to the property owners within the district. We stand ready to assist you as you contemplate improvements to your property.

Property owners within our historic district should be aware that while the GHDC has a controlling interest in virtually all material aspects within the district, some elements of an owner's property – for example, the location of a driveway cut – are not principally

the jurisdiction of the GHDC. In this instance the property owner would need to contact the director of the Department of Public Works. Other elements over which the GHDC does have jurisdiction – for example, the specifics of window and door placement in a new ell addition – also fall within the territory of the town’s building inspector and, perhaps, also of the Conservation Commission if the footprint of the new structure falls within a wetland buffer zone. When in doubt about the scope of your project, a call to the GHDC Chairman early on can help you identify where to start.

## **CERTIFICATE PROCESS**

If you own property in a historic district you will need to alert the GHDC of your intentions and submit an application prior to beginning your proposed project. The application forms may be found on the town’s website at <http://www.town.grafton.ma.us>, or at the Grafton Town Hall. Please note that the certificate is not a building permit; you should also consult Grafton’s building inspector prior to beginning any project.

Applications for Certificates of Appropriateness, Non-Applicability and Hardship must be filed, 30 days prior to the project start date, simultaneously with the GHDC, the Building Inspector and the Town Clerk. The date of the filing of an application is the date on which a copy of such application is received by the office of the Town Clerk. The GHDC has 14 days from the date of filing the certificate to determine whether the scope of the work involves any features that are subject to approval by the GHDC.

If the application requires review by the GHDC, it will likely be placed on the agenda for the next regular monthly meeting. The proponent or his/her representative (i.e., A builder) may be asked to attend the meeting to discuss the project and answer the GHDC’s questions. If the scope of the project is significant, the GHDC may decide to hold a public hearing on the application. Public notice of a hearing is given at least 14 days in advance by posting the notice in Town Hall, and in a newspaper of general circulation in Grafton.

## GENERAL DESIGN GUIDELINES

When reviewing applications, the GHDC will be guided by standards set forth by the U.S. Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the *Treatment of Historic Properties*. In particular, the Standards state that:

1. A property shall be used for its historic purpose or placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.
2. The historic character of a property should be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property should be avoided.
3. Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right should be retained and preserved.
4. Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property should be preserved.
5. Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of a missing feature should be substantiated by documentary, physical or pictorial evidence.
6. New additions, exterior alterations or related new construction that destroy historic materials, features and spatial relationships that characterize the property should be avoided. New work should be differentiated from the old and should be compatible with the building's historic materials, features, size, scale, proportion and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment. New additions and adjacent or related new construction which, if removed in the future, would impair the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment should be avoided.

## **SPECIFIC DESIGN GUIDELINES**

The Grafton Historic District Commission recommends the following guidance for the treatment of historic outbuildings and for the construction and alteration of modern outbuildings.

### **Outbuildings**

**Existing Outbuildings** – Outbuildings, such as barns, garages, sheds, greenhouses, and gazebos, are subject to review and require approval if they are visible from a public way or place. Outbuildings which date to the District's period of significance should be retained and restored whenever possible with particular attention given to siding, roof, windows, and doors. Barns and Outbuildings significant to the District are subject to these Guidelines.

#### **Replacing Existing Outbuilding**

If the existing outbuilding does not meet the current Town of Grafton Zoning By-Law setback requirements, repositioning of the existing outbuilding is required and approval from the Historic District Commission is needed.

**New Outbuildings** – The construction of a new outbuilding may be approved by the Historic District Commission provided it is designed and located in a manner that respects the style of other building(s) on its site, and respects the development pattern and siting of other historic outbuildings in the District. The Commission will consider the size, scale, design, and location of new outbuildings. A site plan should be provided which indicates the relationship to other buildings and structures on the lot and neighboring lots.

Proposals to add New Outbuildings should adhere to the intent of the General Design Guidelines outlined on page 6 of this document.

### **Chimneys and Masonry**

When repointing or rebuilding existing chimney(s), the owner should reuse the existing brick if possible, or find a closely matching replacement. Chimneys should be built to the original height and any corbelling or other decorative features should be retained.

Repointing masonry should be appropriate in terms of the type, color and aggregate of the mortar to be used and the width and profile of the joint. Caps, if necessary, should be made of appropriate material and the size of the chimney wherever possible, original masonry and mortar should be retained. Original mortar should be duplicated in composition, color, texture, joint size, joint profile and method of application.

Original masonry and mortar should be retained, wherever possible, without the application of any surface treatment. Old mortar should be duplicated in composition, color and texture. New mortar should reproduce original in joint profile and size, and should be applied using the same method as the original or existing mortar. Care must be taken in repointing to match the existing joint width and to over cutting of the joints. Joints should not be overfilled with mortar onto the face of the brick or stone. Replacement brick or masonry units and mortar should be carefully matched in size and color to the originals, and follow the traditional brick or masonry coursing if visible from a public way.

If using brick as a cladding material in new construction particular attention should be paid to its detailing to avoid the appearance of a thin non-load bearing veneer.

The applicant may be required to provide a sample of proposed masonry materials.

Proposals to add new Chimneys or Masonry should adhere to the intent of the General Design Guidelines outlined on page 6 of this document.

## **Demolition**

Demolition of any structure or portion thereof within the historic district requires the approval of the Historic District Commission, except when ordered by the Building Commissioner or other safety officer for reasons of public health and safety. Demolition is generally discouraged unless the structure is so deteriorated that rehabilitation is not practical or the structure is of no historic value to the district. In the former instance the Commission may require that a new structure replicating the original be built in the place of the demolished structure if its value is significant to the district.

In general renovation and/or replacement in kind is preferred to the demolition of all or a portion of a historic structure. Likewise, decorative architectural elements on the structure such as trim, brackets bays and porch columns should not be removed without Commission approval. Preference will be given to replacement in kind.

If a historic structure's location interferes with the owner's plans for the property, relocation to an appropriate site is encouraged and is preferred to demolition.

## **Doors**

**Replacement of Original or Historically Significant Doors** - Original or historically significant doors should be retained whenever possible.. Replacement of original or historically significant doors, if necessary, should match the existing in material, size, design, and location. In addition to the door itself, original or architecturally significant surround details, such as frames, fanlights, sidelights, canopies, transoms and other decorative trim should be preserved or, if necessary, replaced in kind.

**Replacement of Non-significant Doors** - If doors that are not original or architecturally significant are to be replaced, the replacement door should be appropriate to the style and use of the building in terms of material, design, size, and location, and be appropriate to the context of the building and the District as a whole. In addition, the Commission must review and approve the scale, design, and material of the surround details and other decorative trim.

**Removal or Relocation of Existing Doors** - Removal or relocation of architecturally significant doors is generally discouraged. Relocation of non-significant doors are acceptable, provided they are not part of and do not contribute to an original or architecturally significant elevation (side) of the building.

**Addition of New Doors** - New doors may be added, provided they do not detract from an original or architecturally significant elevation.

Proposals to add new doors should adhere to the intent of the General Design Guidelines outlined on page 6 of this document.

## **Fences**

Fences should be appropriate in scale and architectural style of the building, the site and its surroundings. Always be sure to check the Grafton Building Code before installing a fence. Fence location is important. Front yard fences should be adjacent to the sidewalk, with similar structures, if desired, extending back along the sidelines of the property. Fences should also align with neighbor fences if possible. When an application is filed to erect a fence, the application must include a plot plan of the property showing the proposed location precisely. Where privacy is an issue, the Historic District Commission suggests planting a living fence or hedge. Plantings are not subject to review by the Historic District Commission.

New fences may be added provided they are appropriate to the style and type of property in terms of material, design, size, and location. Privacy fences, such as solid board fences, are generally discouraged in the District, but may be allowed if minimally visible from a public way and do not obscure visibility of a significant structure from a public way. Stockade, chain link, light gauge metal and concrete block are not considered appropriate materials for fences within the Historic District and generally will not be approved by the commission.

## **Foundations**

**Existing Foundations** – In both residential and commercial buildings, the typical foundation material is unpainted brick or granite. In all cases, the material and design of original or architecturally significant foundations should be preserved whenever possible. Where repair or re-pointing is necessary, refer to the Masonry Guideline for mortar specifications.

**New Foundations** – Guidelines for New Construction set forth principles for the use of materials, scale and massing. Often new foundations are substantially higher than historic foundations. This construction technique can alter the appearance of the entire building. Every effort should be made to design a low foundation and to screen a foundation that must be high due to building code conditions. Proposals to add new Foundations should adhere to the intent of the General Design Guidelines outlined on page 6.

## **Landscaping**

While the Historic District Commission does not have jurisdiction over landscape planting, property owners are encouraged when contemplating landscape changes to consult the wide variety of historic landscape resources that recommend choices suitable for the architectural style of their property.

## **Grading and Site Work**

When grading the site for either an addition or new construction the existing, natural contours and topography of the landscape should be preserved to the fullest extent possible. Proposed building heights are measured from the original grade prior to any site work. In designing the site, natural features such as large trees, watercourses, scenic or historic spots, habitats of rare or endangered species, and similar community assets should be preserved.

## **Gutters, Downspouts, and Drainage**

It is strongly recommended that Gutters constructed of wood, seamless painted aluminum or other metal should be of a scale, contour, and detail found to be compatible with the style and the historic character of the building. Unpainted, mill-finished aluminum is generally not appropriate for flashings, gutters and downspouts within the Historic District. Attachments should be concealed and visible hanging straps or brackets should not be used. Installation should not involve the removal of any historic detailing such as cornice moldings or brackets whenever possible. Gutters are considered inappropriate if constructed of short sections, visible brackets, heavy connectors and prominent end caps and would generally not be approved by the commission.

## Rain Barrels

Rain Barrels installed in the Grafton Historic District must conform to the aesthetic character, design, construction and landscaping requirements of the Grafton Historic District Commission, and shall require a Certificate of Appropriateness prior to installation, including details on how the Rain Barrels will be installed, screened and shield to obscure their view.

**Definition** – The Grafton Historic District defines a Rain Barrel as a system that collects and stores rainwater from a roof that would otherwise be lost to runoff and diverted to storm drains or the town sewage system.

**Types of Rain Barrel** – Rain Barrels may be ready-made or self-fabricated constructed from materials such plastic (polyethylene), wood, concrete, resin, as well as fiberglass and stainless steel, which are rust and chemical resistant. Wooden Rain Barrels must be lined to prevent leakage and contamination of the surrounding areas.

### Specifications

- 1. Size.** Typically, 55 gallon barrels are used for water collection and storage. The maximum capacity of Rain Barrels allowed shall not exceed 75 gallons.
- 2. Height.** The height of a Rain Barrels shall not exceed four feet above the surrounding grade. An elevated platform and footing are required. The overall height of the Rain Barrels and the platform together shall not exceed five feet.
- 3. Equipment.** All Rain Barrels within the district must be equipped with an overflow pipe or hose, or an automatic overflow diverter so that when a Rain Barrel is full, the rainwater is directed away from the foundation of the principle structure by way of the overflow device and into a drainage swale. No drainage from an overflow device shall discharge upon any neighboring property. Any overflow pipe, diverter or hose must be at least 2 inches in diameter.
  - a.** Rain Barrels must be equipped with a mosquito-proof screen on the lid and over the overflow device (pipe or hose), constructed of corrosion resistant wire or mesh, to prevent insects, debris, and bird droppings from entering into the water.
  - b.** Lids on Rain Barrels must be securely fastened at all times to prevent access by children and small animals.
  - c.** Rain Barrels fabricated from fiberglass, polypropylene and resin must be opaque in color to prevent the exposure of stored water to sunlight, and to decrease or inhibit algae growth.

- d. The Exterior of a Rain Barrel shall not be painted or decorated in such a manner that it is inconsistent with the surrounding area or does not conform to the aesthetic character and architectural design or landscaping of the Historic District.
- e. Connections of Rain Barrels shall be completely isolated from any drinkable water source, and shall be operated in such a manner as to avoid creating a public or private nuisance.

**Authorized Uses** – Rain Barrels are to be used only to collect rainwater for use on lawns and gardens, for irrigation, and are not for consumption. Under no circumstances shall water from a rain barrel be used for drinking, cooking, bathing or any potable use.

**Location** – Since Rain Barrels are designed specifically to capture rainwater from fixed surfaces, they need to be strategically placed above ground to optimize the absorption of rainwater runoff. Therefore, Rain Barrels should be positioned near the best rain flow and located in an area that is out of the view of the general public.

## Composting

The purpose of these guidelines is to establish the minimum standards which will must be followed when creating a compost site within the historic district that are environmentally safe while conforming to the historic character of the district.

A Composting Site within the district must follow the MassDEP Leaf and Yard Waste Composting Guidance Document, as well as, Article 25 of the Grafton Conservation Commission General Wetlands Protection By-Law. The MassDEP LYW Composting Guidance Document can be found on the Massachusetts Government Website at <http://www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/massdep/recycle/regulations/waste-and-recycling-policies-and-guidance.html>. The Grafton Conservation Commission General Wetlands Protection By-Law Article 25 can be found on their website page at [http://www.grafton-ma.gov/Public\\_Documents/GraftonMA\\_Conservation/index](http://www.grafton-ma.gov/Public_Documents/GraftonMA_Conservation/index).

**Location** – The following standard should be used when selecting a composting location within the Grafton Historic District.

1. A Site must not be located within 400 feet of any public drinking water supply or private well, and shall have a 250 foot buffer (Protected Area) from any wetlands in the composting area.
2. A Site must be located at least 100 feet from surface waters to ensure that there will not be any potential adverse impacts from runoffs.

3. Site soils should have enough drainage to minimize run-off, yet capable of filtering drainage waters. Highly impermeable soils (i.e., clay) should be avoided, to safeguard against poor drainage and excessive runoff or erosion of the site.

**Buffering** – Composting Sites should be adequately buffered from adjacent residences, businesses, schools, and parks. Buffers, including both distance and visual screening should be used to minimize the impact of any odor, noise, and aesthetic degradation.

An adequate buffer zone must be available to screen the site from public view. A distance of at least 250 feet from the nearest dwelling to the composting area is recommended. Buffering must be adequate to satisfy the concerns of neighbors. Visual screening should also be used to protect the aesthetic integrity of the district.

**Types of Compost Bins** – The Grafton Historic District Commission requires Rodent-Resistant bins to be used with a maximum capacity of 24 cubic feet.

## **Lighting**

The Grafton Historic District represents a variety of architectural periods where exterior lighting was either all but nonexistent or in the early stages of development. It is desirable that original or later appropriate exterior lighting fixtures be retained and if possible repaired. Deteriorated or missing elements should be replaced with like materials whenever possible.

The replacement of existing exterior lighting fixtures with new fixtures should reflect a design and scale that is appropriate to the architectural style and period of the building. It is preferable that exterior lighting be kept at low levels to prevent glare or overspill of the light off the property. Over-illumination of building facades with flood lights is inappropriate to the historic district and generally would not be approved by the commission.

The Proposals to add exterior lighting for new additions or changes to a structure should adhere to the intent of the General Design Guidelines outlined on page 6 of this document.

## **New Additions or Structures**

New construction, alterations, and additions to existing buildings within the Historic District are considered in this category. Proposals for new additions or structures will be dictated in part by the Town of Grafton Zoning By-Law which should be referenced carefully before proceeding with design. As in all cases of project design review, the Historic District Commission will consider and advise on the project's adherence to the intent of the General Design Guidelines outlined on page 6 of this document.

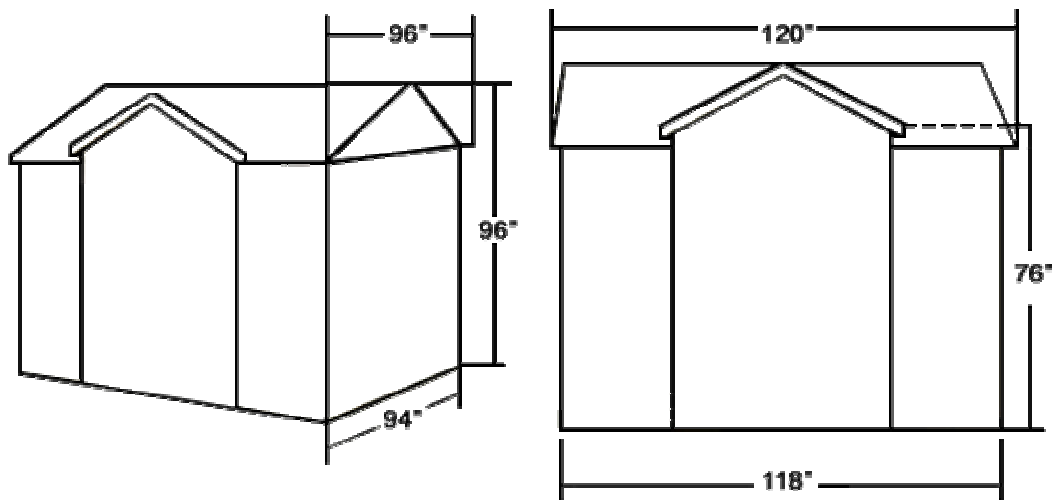
## Sheds, Gazebos, Play, Pools, or Other Structures

Above ground pools, play structures, and the like are elements that require careful siting within the Historic District. Every effort should be made to site these elements out of view from the public way to the maximum extent possible, or screen them with plantings when it is not. In the case of sheds, gazebos and other structures, selecting ones that compliment the principal structure in both architectural style and materials is desirable. A Certificate of Appropriateness is required for all of these items.

**Sheds** – A shed as defined by the GHDC shall be a single-storey structure of 120 square feet or less, on the same property as the principal structure but separated from the principle structure. The maximum height of a shed is eight feet (8'), regardless of square foot size, measured from the finished floor to the main roof eave.

A shed, shall comply with accessory building permits and setbacks as established in the Grafton Zoning By-Law. Sheds may not be placed on utility or drainage easements.

**Sample Drawing of Shed Details: Front and Side Elevation**



## **Application Certification Process, for the construction and or placement of a Shed with the historic district**

- 1.** An application for Certificates of Appropriateness to allow for the construction and or placement of a shed with the Historic District, the Building Inspector and the Town Clerk as outlined on page 5; Section Certificate Process of this document, and must be submitted to the Grafton Historic Commission, no matter what type of construction or size. Application forms may be found on the town's website at <http://www.town.grafton.ma.us>, or at the Grafton Town Hall. Please note that the Certificate of Appropriates is not a building permit; you should also consult with the Grafton's building inspector prior to beginning any project; as outlined on page 5; Certificate Process; of this document.
- 2.** An application shall include a certified plot plan showing the location of the shed, the size of the structure, and a framing plan. It should be noted that although a shed may not be large enough to require a building permit the owner should check with the Building Department about zoning regulations and if a building permit is required a copy is to be filed with the Historic District Commission prior to any installation or site construction.
- 3.** An application to allow for the construction and or placement of a shed with the Historic District must receive approval from the Grafton Historic District Commission before it will be allowed within the Historic District.
- 4.** Attach two (2) copies of shed drawings to the application showing the construction details. Drawings should indicate the dimensions and materials of the shed. The dimensions and materials should include the Roof covering, Roof sheathing, Roof slope or pitch, Roof framing, Rafter, Wall or Collar ties, Wall framing stud size, Brace corner type, Wall sheathing, Building wrap, Wall finish material(s), Open header sizes and Foundation type(s).
- 5.** Attach two (2) copies of the plat of survey showing the location of the shed, setbacks to property lines, and all utilities (electric, gas, phone, sewer, water, etc.). The survey shall be to scale, and not reduced or enlarged when copied.

## **Paint**

Color is a primary element of a building's style and should reflect a balanced consideration of authenticity and personal taste.

Property owners who wish to repaint the exterior of their building with its current color are not required to submit an application to the commission.

The Historic District Commission is required to approve any change in color to the exterior of a building within the district. It is recommended for building owners to consider the age and architectural style of their building along with the color of adjacent buildings when selecting exterior colors. When submitting for a change in color please include the following with your application:

- Color name and manufacture's number
- Sample painted on wood

The Historic District Commission is available to assist the property owner in the choice of a suitable color for their property.

Proposals to paint new additions or changes to a structure should adhere to the intent of the General Design Guidelines outlined on page 6 of this document.

## **Porches, Stoops, Balconies, and Porticos**

It is recommended that existing porches, stoops, balconies, and porticos be retained and when necessary repaired "in kind" in order to maintain the historic appearance of the structure. Enclosing them with windows or walls or otherwise modifying their original appearance is not desirable and would generally not be approved by the commission.

Proposals to add new porches, stoops, balconies, and porticos should adhere to the intent of the General Design Guidelines outlined on page 6 of this document.

## **Roofs**

The roof slope and configuration is an important element to the historic character of a building. Whenever possible the original slope and configuration should be maintained.

The preservation and repair of slate and cedar roofs is encouraged wherever possible. Where asphalt or fiberglass shingles are used, it is imperative that they have a configuration and color that replicates historic materials. Rubber or membrane roofs should not be used in visible locations. Rooftop HVAC equipment and other mechanical elements should be placed out of view.

Skylights should be placed out of view if possible. If possible any decorative patterns or textures of roofing material should be maintained.

Roof trims such as cornice trim, fascias and rake boards, decorative metal, finials, and weathervanes should be retained whenever possible.

Proposals to add new roofs for additions or changes to a structure should adhere to the intent of the General Design Guidelines outlined on page 6 of this document.

## **Siding and Trim**

It is preferred that original siding and trim materials be retained whenever possible and deteriorated materials repaired or replaced with new material that closely as possible duplicates the original.

It is also strongly recommended that siding and trim materials common to the historic district, such as clapboard, brick, and wood be utilized for repair or replacement.

Property owners are asked to consider preserving existing trim if possible and replacing it in kind when necessary.

The historic commission highly encourages property owners to remove non-original materials and replace them with materials appropriate to the historic district.

Proposals for additions and new construction should adhere to the intent of the General Design Guidelines outlined on page 6 of this document. In addition, careful attention should be placed on neighboring historic buildings and the vicinity to determine the appropriate application and proportioning of siding and trim.

## **Signs**

The Historic District Commission has established sign guidelines to ensure that all signs within the district are compatible and harmonious integrated with the character of the district. These design guidelines apply to the exterior signs within the historic district, including new signs and the rehabilitation of existing signs. The Historic District Commission has the authority to further regulate signs to ensure that new and altered signs are appropriate for the historic setting.

**Property owners and tenant businesses** proposing a sign of any type should consult Section 4.4 of the Grafton Zoning By-Law which details the requirements that must be met in order to obtain a sign permit. In addition, it is strongly recommended that the applicant review their request with the Zoning By-Law official before submission.

The Historic District Commission also must approve signs to ensure that their basic design, color, size and scale are properly integrated with the architectural character of the building and the streetscape.

**Appropriate and Inappropriate Types of Signs** – Wooden signs are appropriate in the historic district. Synthetic signs, paper signs, neon signs, the use of aggressive colors are viewed as inappropriate by the historic district commission.

**Aggressive Colors** – The Grafton Historic District Commission defines aggressive colors as any over-bearing, vibrant, or florescent color (such as orange, yellow, pink, indigo, purple) which detracts from the historic character or architectural features of the district.

## **Sign Guidelines**

The goal of the guidelines is to meet the needs of various interests in the community by providing guidance in determining the suitability and architectural compatibility of proposed signs, while providing guidance in planning and designing future sign projects.

**Guideline 1. Sign Colors** – Should complement the colors of the building.

- The number of colors used on a sign should be limited. In general, no more than three (3) colors should be used.
- Sign colors should coordinate with the overall building colors.
- Colors should be used both to accentuate the sign design and message, and to integrate the sign or lettering with the building and its context.

**Guideline 2. Lighting** – Whenever possible, sign lighting should reflect the style of the sign and historic character of the principle structure. Lighting should illuminate the sign with as little spillage as possible. Up-lighting and colored lights are considered inappropriate for the historic district and will not be approved by the commission.

**Guideline 3. Historic Integrity** – A sign should preserve, complement or enhance the architectural composition and features of the building.

- Covering or obscuring significant architectural details should be avoided.
- Damage to architectural detail when attaching the sign should be avoided.

**Guideline 4. Overall Design** – Consider the overall sign design as an integral part of the building facade.

- The new sign should be coordinated with the overall facade composition, including ornamental details and other signs.
- Signs should be in proportion to the building, so they do not dominate the building appearance.

**Guideline 5. Proportion and Scale** – A sign should be designed to be in proportion and scale with the principal building.

- A sign should be in scale with the facade of the building.
- Signs that would cover more than 20 percent of the facade should be avoided.

**Guideline 6. Location** – A sign should be designed to be part of the overall building composition.

- A sign should be located on a building so it emphasizes the architectural elements of the facade.
- A sign should be mounted to fit within existing architectural features. The shape of the sign should be used to reinforce the relationship of moldings and transoms seen along the street.
- Signs should have a human scale, and be pedestrian oriented.
- Signs that are illegible when viewed from the sidewalk, or are located too high up on a building are not allowed, and must be repositioned at the proper high or be removed.
- A sign should be located on a building so that it draws an individual's attention toward the building or the use that it is intended to support.

**Guideline 7. Height Limitations** – The use of signs placed on upper levels of a building should be limited since they will be visible over an extended distance and are not related to the street or entrance level of the premises.

- Generally, signs should be placed in an architecturally appropriate location no more than 20 feet above the sidewalk.
- In certain cases, signs on buildings along principal streets may be placed higher on a facade when it is determined that the sign will not have a negative impact on the design, or design elements of the facade.
- Signs which do not relate to the business within the building generally would not be considered appropriate, unless they relate to the historic use of the building.

**Guideline 8. Lighting (Illumination)** – Lighting or illumination of signs on upper levels should be limited to the brightness of lower level signs.

## **Materials to submit with a Sign application**

- A scaled drawing 25% of the actual proposed sign, detailing the thickness of the sign, specifications for materials, colors, and typeface to be used.
- Actual sample of sign material and paint and finishes proposed for the sign
- Photographs or elevations of building showing the exact location of the proposed sign
- Details and specifications for proposed brackets/hangers, colors installation method, and lighting fixtures, etc.
- Lighting plan (if necessary)

## **Shutters**

If appropriate for the building, existing shutters shall be retained and repaired whenever possible. Where replacement is necessary, new shutters shall match the original or be of an appropriate type for the building. Shutters should reflect their original use and be sized such that they cover the entire window when closed. It's preferable that when replacement or new shutters are hung they appear to be operable with slats pointing up when open and down when closed over the window. It is recommended that the shutters be made of wood. Vinyl, aluminum, or metal shutters are not desirable and generally not be approved by the commission. The permanent removal of shutters from the building requires approval from the commission.

## **Stairways, Steps, and Railings**

Stairways, steps, and railings are important features of entryways and porches. It is recommended that whenever possible original features and detailing be retained or repaired in the same design and material. If existing features are not original, it is desirable that replacement design and materials are appropriate to the style of the building.

It is preferred that deteriorated or missing elements and decorative ornamentation be replaced with materials and elements to match original, or be appropriate to the original. Stonework may be repaired, replaced, or extended using the existing materials and all new work should be appropriate to the period and character of the building.

Railing/baluster design and spacing should be historically appropriate and repaired to existing railing/balusters and should maintain the original proportions when possible.

Proposals for new stairways, steps, and railings should adhere to the intent of the General Design Guidelines outlined on page 6 of this document. (Note: If a new railing design is desired a scale drawing illustrating details of the new design must be provided).

## **Windows**

Windows are a key element in contributing to a building's appearance and establishing the scale and rhythm of the façade. It is recommended that original wood sashes are repaired in kind, whenever possible, particularly for those facing the public way.

Retrofitting of original window sashes with weather stripping and/or insulated glass is encouraged. If necessary, replacement sashes and hardware within the original frames is preferred. If total replacement is required it is recommended that the owners maintain original window size, location, material, trim, and type of window.

The Historic District Commission is available to assist you in determining a suitable window type for your building. Proposals to add new windows for additions or changes to a structure should adhere to the intent of the General Design Guidelines outlined on page 6 of this document.

## **Grafton Historic District Applications**

The following Applications are provided by the Grafton Historic District Commission for your convenience, and are also available from the Grafton Town Hall Clerk's Office located at 30 Providence Road, Grafton, Massachusetts.

They can also be downloaded from the GHDC website page at :[http://www.graftonma.gov/Public\\_Documents/GraftonMA\\_Committees/Historic%20District%20Commission/index\\_GHDC](http://www.graftonma.gov/Public_Documents/GraftonMA_Committees/Historic%20District%20Commission/index_GHDC)



**TOWN OF GRAFTON**  
GRAFTON MEMORIAL MUNICIPAL CENTER  
30 PROVIDENCE ROAD  
GRAFTON, MASSACHUSETTS 01519

**HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION**

**Application for a Certificate of Appropriateness**

**To:** Historic District Commission  
c/o Town Clerk  
Grafton Memorial Municipal Center  
30 Providence Road  
Grafton, MA 01519

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Applicant's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Town / City: \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (     ) \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: (     ) \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Address of Proposed Work:**

\_\_\_\_\_

Pursuant to the Historic Districts Act (Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 40C, as amended) and the Grafton Historic District By-law, application is hereby made for certification of the proposed exterior work or change to the structure within the Grafton Historic District.

Please check below those exterior features that will be altered:

\_\_\_\_\_ New construction      \_\_\_\_\_ Replacement      \_\_\_\_\_ Demolition

Alteration of one or more of the following *exterior* features (check all that apply):

_____ Awnings	_____ Chimney	_____ Lighting
_____ Door accessories	_____ Ornaments	_____ Trim/molding
_____ Fence and wall	_____ Gutter / downspout	_____ Monument
_____ Paint	_____ Porch / veranda	_____ Railing
_____ Roof accessories	_____ Roof	_____ Steps
_____ Sign	_____ Shutters / blinds	_____ Utilities
_____ Window	_____ Other _____	

Town of Grafton  
Historic District Commission  
Application of Certificate of Appropriateness

**Description of Proposed Work:** Submit plot plans, site plan, architectural plans and specification of material as appropriate. When the proposed work includes relocation or demolition, provide plans and specifications for the restoration of the grounds.

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**Estimated Completion Date of Proposed Work:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Architect (if any):** \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Town / City: \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (     ) \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: (     ) \_\_\_\_\_

**General Contractor (if any):** \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Town / City: \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (     ) \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: (     ) \_\_\_\_\_

5. Signature of Applicant \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

6. Signature of Owner \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Conditions on Proposed Work:**

*(Completed by Grafton Historic District Commission)*

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*Town of Grafton  
Historic District Commission  
Application of Certificate of Appropriateness*

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**Application Approved** \_\_\_\_\_

**Application Disapproved** \_\_\_\_\_

*(Certificate expires 12 months from date of issue)*

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**Signature of Commission Chair** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature of Commission Vice-Chair** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature of Commission Clerk** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature of Commission Member** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature of Commission Member** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature of Commission Member** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature of Commission Member** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

*(Completed by Grafton Historic District Commission)*



**TOWN OF GRAFTON**  
GRAFTON MEMORIAL MUNICIPAL CENTER  
30 PROVIDENCE ROAD  
GRAFTON, MASSACHUSETTS 01519

**HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION**

**Application for a Certificate of Non-Applicability**

**To:** Historic District Commission  
c/o Town Clerk  
Grafton Memorial Municipal Center  
30 Providence Road  
Grafton, MA 01519

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Applicant's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Town / City: \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (     ) \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: (     ) \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Address of Proposed Work:**

\_\_\_\_\_

Pursuant to the Historic Districts Act (Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 40C, as amended) and the Grafton Historic District By-law, application is hereby made for a Certificate of Non-Applicability within the Grafton Common Historic District. A Certificate of Non-Applicability is granted when the proposed work involves changes which are not subject to the Commission's control.

The following changes are examples of things not subject to control by the Commission:

- ☐ Ordinary maintenance, repair, or replacement of any exterior feature which does not involve a change in design, material color or outward appearance;
- ☐ Temporary signs or structures;
- ☐ Landscaping with plants, trees, or shrubs;
- ☐ Terraces, walks, driveways, and sidewalks.

**Description of Proposed Work:**

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**Estimated Completion Date of Proposed Work:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Architect (if any):** \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Town / City: \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (     ) \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: (     ) \_\_\_\_\_

**General Contractor (if any):** \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Town / City: \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (     ) \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: (     ) \_\_\_\_\_

5. Signature of Applicant \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

6. Signature of Owner \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Conditions on Proposed Work:**

*(Completed by Grafton Historic District Commission)*

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Town of Grafton  
Historic District Commission  
Application of Certificate of Non-Applicability

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**Application Approved** \_\_\_\_\_

**Application Disapproved** \_\_\_\_\_  
(Certificate expires 12 months from date of issue)

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**Signature of Commission Chair** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature of Commission Vice-Chair** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature of Commission Clerk** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature of Commission Member** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature of Commission Member** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature of Commission Member** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature of Commission Member** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

(Completed by Grafton Historic District Commission)



**TOWN OF GRAFTON**  
GRAFTON MEMORIAL MUNICIPAL CENTER  
30 PROVIDENCE ROAD  
GRAFTON, MASSACHUSETTS 01519

**HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION**

**Application for a Certificate of Hardship**

**To:** Historic District Commission  
c/o Town Clerk  
Grafton Memorial Municipal Center  
30 Providence Road  
Grafton, MA 01519

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Applicant's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Town / City:** \_\_\_\_\_ **State** \_\_\_\_\_ **Zip** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone:** (     ) \_\_\_\_\_ **Fax:** (     ) \_\_\_\_\_

**Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address of Proposed Work:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Pursuant to the Historic Districts Act (Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 40C, as amended) and the Grafton Historic District By-law, application is hereby made for certification of the proposed exterior work or change to the structure within the Grafton Historic District and that the proposed work requires a significant financial hardship if appropriate standards are met.

Please check below those exterior features that will be altered:

\_\_\_\_\_ New construction      \_\_\_\_\_ Replacement      \_\_\_\_\_ Demolition

Alteration of one or more of the following *exterior* features (check all that apply):

_____ Awnings	_____ Chimney	_____ Lighting
_____ Door accessories	_____ Ornaments	_____ Trim/molding
_____ Fence and wall	_____ Gutter / downspout	_____ Monument
_____ Paint	_____ Porch / veranda	_____ Railing
_____ Roof accessories	_____ Roof	_____ Steps
_____ Sign	_____ Shutters / blinds	_____ Utilities
_____ Window	_____ Other _____	

**Description of Proposed Work:** Submit plot plans, site plan, architectural plans and specification of material as appropriate. When the proposed work includes relocation or demolition, provide plans and specifications for the restoration of the grounds.

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**Brief Explanation of Hardship:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Estimated Completion Date of Proposed Work:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Architect (if any):** \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Town / City: \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (     ) \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: (     ) \_\_\_\_\_

**General Contractor (if any):** \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Town / City: \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (     ) \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: (     ) \_\_\_\_\_

5. Signature of Applicant \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

6. Signature of Owner \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Town of Grafton  
Historic District Commission  
Application of Certificate of Hardship

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**Conditions on Proposed Work:**

*(Completed by Grafton Historic District Commission)*

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**Application Approved** \_\_\_\_\_

**Application Disapproved** \_\_\_\_\_

*(Certificate expires 12 months from date of issue)*

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**Signature of Commission Chair** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature of Commission Vice-Chair** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature of Commission Clerk** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature of Commission Member** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature of Commission Member** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature of Commission Member** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature of Commission Member** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

*(Completed by Grafton Historic District Commission)*

## APPENDIX

### List of recommended Resources:

PreservationMass: A statewide organization with a website listing, consultants in various historic conservation, preservation, and restoration specialties.  
[www.preservationmass.org](http://www.preservationmass.org)

The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection Leaf and Yard Waste Composting Guidance Document.  
[www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/massdep/recycle/regulations/waste-and-recycling-policies-and-guidance.html](http://www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/massdep/recycle/regulations/waste-and-recycling-policies-and-guidance.html).

The Grafton Conservation Commission General Wetlands Protection By-Law Article 25  
[www.grafton-ma.gov/Public\\_Documents/GraftonMA\\_Conservation/index](http://www.grafton-ma.gov/Public_Documents/GraftonMA_Conservation/index).

Historic Building Facades: The Manual for Maintenance and Rehabilitation (Preservation Press) New York Landmarks Conservancy, William G.

The Old House Dictionary: An Illustrated Guide to American Domestic Architecture, 1600-1940.

Caring for Your Old House: A Guide for Owners and Residents  
Judith L. Kitchen.

A Building History of Northern New England -  
Winner of the 2002 SPNEA/Historic New England Book Prize  
James L. Garvin

The Old House Journal Magazine and publications

Housekeeping for Historic Sites. Video  
VHS format. 60 minutes.  
Produced in collaboration with the National Park Service and the New York State Bureau of Historic sites, this instructional film describes proper cleaning methods for different types of objects commonly found in historic houses.

Landscapes and Gardens for Historic Buildings, Rudy J. Favretti and Joy Putman  
Favretti. Second edition, revised. AltaMira Press, CA 1991

For Every House A Garden: A Guide for Reproducing Period Gardens  
Rudy and Joy Favretti.

Tower Hill Botanic Garden and library, 11 French Dive, Boylston, MA  
[www.towerhillbg.org](http://www.towerhillbg.org)